

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

December 17, 2012

7:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, December 17, 2012, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following members were present: Elizabeth Connor, Patricia Doyle, Ann Hall, William Padien, and Christopher Willi. Robert Hicks was also in attendance. Mr. Padien asked for a moment of silence out of respect for the students, teachers, and families in Newtown, CT.

Annual Pre-Budget Meeting with Town Council

Kim Gaffett, Ken Lacoste, Sean McGarry, Norris Pike, Chris Warfel, and Town Manager Nancy Dodge were in attendance for the pre-budget meeting between the School Committee and the Town Council. There have been no changes or additions to the capital projects that were previously submitted to the town. However, there have been some issues with the old roof, but the areas have been patched and local contractors feel the roof could last 3-5 years if we keep patching the seams. The School Committee is interested in adding more solar panels and it would be nice if this could dovetail with the roof replacement. It was noted that the current roof was not engineered to hold solar panels and the architect was concerned when this was brought to his attention.

Mr. Hicks reported that the biggest impact to next year's budget will be the addition of a student with exceptional needs. In addition, there seems to be quite a bit of student interest in the ceramics class, which had been eliminated a few years ago. Adding ceramics to the curriculum would cost approximately \$8,000. Mr. Hicks and the School Committee have been discussing the possibility of an administrative reorganization, but this could be accomplished with little or no budget impact. There is a freeze in the teachers' salaries next year, but health care costs remain unknown. Mr. Hicks is concerned about the property and liability insurance because of several large weather related issues/claims over the last few years (hurricanes Sandy and Irene, a roof collapse in a district under the weight of a large amount of snow, and the flooding because of rain). It was reported that The Trust has been hit hard in reinsurance costs. Other than the items mentioned above, Mr. Hicks does not see anything that would cause a substantial increase in the budget and hopes to keep any increases at a minimum.

Chris Warfel asked if there was a possibility to reduce costs and mentioned the Johnson Controls study. Mr. Hicks explained that technology costs are down and should remain that way. He thought perhaps the kitchen fan could be replaced, but was told by an outside source that we do not run our kitchen/stove enough to pay for the cost to upgrade. Savings in lighting costs come from electric company rebates that are not available to us.

Mr. Hicks reviewed the status of the reserve accounts. Fiscal year 2011-12 ended with a fund balance of \$266,016. Some of this money is restricted, committed, and assigned. If 3 to 3.5 percent is kept as a safety cushion, approximately \$62,499 - \$85,568 would be available to fund the operating budget or for unbudgeted repairs. Money has been committed for the purchase of

the floor washer and for the extra expense associated with the audit. His goal, however, is to recapture the additional audit expense.

Total Fund Balances	\$266,016	
Restricted	\$ (1,105)	Grant funds
Committed	\$28,769	Committed to 2012-13 Budget
Assigned	\$14,366	Assigned for OPEB
Unassigned	\$223,986	Available
2012-13 Budget	\$4,613,922	
3% of budget	\$138,418	
Unassigned less 3%	\$85,568	
3.5% of budget	\$161,487	
Unassigned less 3.5%	\$62,499	

Approval of Minutes

A motion (Hall, Doyle) to approve the minutes of the meetings held on November 14 and 19, 2012, as written carried with a vote of 5-0.

Reports

The standing of accounts through November 30, 2012, was submitted for School Committee review. A motion (Padien, Connor) to accept the finance report through November 30, 2012, as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks explained that a few weeks ago parents were notified about a new lunch menu due to a change in federal meal requirements. The new requirements, which are very strict on nutritional composition and portion size, made it difficult to continue our tradition of making meals from scratch, customizing meals, and providing seconds when available. Aramark and other food companies addressed the new requirements by providing a prepared meal menu or a processed food meal. The Block Island School lunch program found this unacceptable and exercised its option to create a menu that must be certified by the state. Food Service Director Glen Pence worked with Aramark to create the menu and we are now awaiting its certification. Once certified, we will receive an additional six cents per reimburseable meal. Block Island School has missed out on approximately \$50 per month in reimbursements since October while the new menu is being certified. However, because most of our meals are ala carte it was feared that a switch to less acceptable food would cost us much more revenue from lost sales than would be received from the slightly higher reimbursement rate.

Mr. Hicks explained that monthly attendance rates are running about 2.5 percent better than last year and Fridays are about one percent better.

Old Business

According to School Committee Bylaws, policies require action by a majority of the School Committee at two successive regular meetings or a unanimous vote of all five members at a regular meeting. The following five policies were presented for a second vote because only four committee members were present at last month's meeting.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve Policy BAA: Duties and Management Principles as posted carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve Policy BAE: Committees of the School Committee as posted carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve Policy BAG: Orientation of School Committee Candidates as posted carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve Policy BAL: Goals and Objectives as posted carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve Policy BAM: Meetings as posted carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks stated that the questions and comments made by the School Committee at last month's meeting regarding the administrative reorganization caused him to rethink some of the issues. He shifted some things around and found about \$24,000 in offsets, so the current increase for the restructuring is just over \$3,000. Most of the cuts were found in the administrators' salaries and Social Security /FICA costs. The less this impacts the budget the less crucial it is to have everything in place prior to adopting next year's budget. He discussed the change with the teachers' leadership, but felt it better not to speak for them. Mr. Hicks stated that when Dr. Irving, the last full-time principal, left he took on some of her duties, but would give them back to a full-time person. He currently has oversight of the teacher evaluation process, but would shift this to the full-time principal with the other part-time administrators continuing their share of the evaluations based on the number of hours worked. Mr. Hicks explained that each teacher's evaluation takes about 10 hours per year with classroom observations, pre- and post-observation meetings, and writing the evaluations. Elizabeth Connor stated that one of her concerns is cutting back the days of part-time personnel. She didn't want to see everything added back in, but cautioned Mr. Hicks not to cut too much. Other committee members also voiced concern in reducing the superintendent's time and suggested 10-12 days instead of the 15 days per year currently being recommended. When asked about curriculum work Mr. Hicks explained that teachers had a little more freedom in the past with reading programs and how lessons were structured, but the new standards are more prescriptive with less flexibility. The principal would work with teachers to make sure proper ratios are in place between fiction and non-fiction. Pat Doyle stated that she visited the Info Works site and was amazed at our superb ratio of administrators to students. She hopes to avoid any overkill in cuts, but to find a compromise so we get the most value for our students. Committee members are interested in hearing comments/concerns from staff members at next month's meeting and seeing the proposed budget.

New Business

It was suggested that Policy BAK: Policy Adoption and Amendment be changed by shortening the required posting time from 30-20 days, permitting policies to consistently return at the next regular meeting. A motion (Padien, Connor) to post Policy BAK: Policy Adoption and Amendment for the required 30 days carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve the request from Kate Ryan to home school her daughter, Cora, from February 11-March 1, 2013, carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve the request from Carolina Stanton to home school her son, Noah, from December 17, 2012-January 24, 2013, carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to consent to the appointment of Mark Mollicone as the head coach for the varsity boys' basketball team carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to consent to the appointment of Paul Hemingway as the assistant coach for the varsity boys' basketball team pending receipt of all required documentation carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to consent to the appointment of Robert Closter, Jr. as the head coach for the varsity girls' basketball team carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Paul Hemingway as the head coach for the junior high boys' basketball team pending receipt of all required documentation carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Robert Closter, Jr. as the co-coach for the junior high girls' basketball team carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to consent to the appointment of Tim Keane as the co-coach for the junior high girls' basketball team carried with a vote of 5-0.

A list of proposed School Committee meeting dates for 2013 was submitted for review. It was noted that the January, February, and April meetings should not be held on the third Monday because of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday and the winter/spring recesses. A motion (Padien, Connor) to approve the 2013 meeting schedule as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks suggested that the budget for 2013-14 be presented to the School Committee at the January 14 meeting with workshops on January 28 and February 4. Adoption would be scheduled for the regular meeting on February 11, with February 25 as a backup if necessary. January 22 was added to the list of budget workshops because Mr. Willi will be unavailable to attend meetings during the first two weeks in February.

Calendar of Events

The next regular School Committee meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 14, 2013. The high school hand bell choir has been invited to perform at the Providence Place Mall on Thursday, December 20.

Correspondence

Correspondence was received from AFSCME Rhode Island Council 94 requesting that negotiations for a successor contract begin for the Town Employees.

A copy of the letter from the varsity girls' basketball team to Brian McMahon thanking him for his donation of \$1000 to purchase uniforms was submitted for School Committee information.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Doyle) at 8:55 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: January 14, 2013